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## I.

### EFFECTS OF ARDENT SPIRITS UPON THE CONSTITUTION IN CAUSING DISEASE.\*

1. *THEY act as an exciting cause to all diseases to which a predisposition, whether hereditary or acquired, previously existed.* We possess different conditions of physical structure, and peculiar tendencies to some diseases rather than to others, and which are excited into activity by various morbid agents. Intemperance, then, acting on an individual strongly predisposed to any particular disease, would, on a general principle, bring it forward sooner than it would otherwise appear. Erysipelas, scrofula, gout, dyspepsia, and many other diseases, follow in the paths of this vice, which the sufferer might have deferred, probably altogether have prevented, by a counteracting course of abstinence from all stimulants. Add to this, almost everything goes wrong in a drunkard's constitution; he is an altered subject, both in respect to the character of his disease, and the influence of medicine; and the ordinary rules of practice in such cases are almost as likely to destroy life as to preserve it.

It is stated by the author of *Sketches on India*, that the British

officers under Gen. Mathews, who were confined for years in the dungeons of Seringapatam, and kept on rice and water, were many of them, when captured by Hyder Ali, affected with liver complaints, and had received severe wounds, yet upon returning to their regiments, found themselves in perfect health—and were higher in rank by the death of their brethren, who had been cheering themselves with old Madeira, Champagne and Brandy, at the expense of both health and life.

2. *The free use of ardent spirits hastens a premature old age, with all its attending infirmities.* It is remarked by even common observers, that he who lives freely and luxuriously lives fast.—“It seems to be a law of our nature, that life should be consumed by the very motions which are necessary to its existence; as if the stimuli required to sustain the actions of life, were the means tending ultimately to its extinction.” In illustration of this, some cold-blooded animals, as every reader knows, have been taken out of the depths of the earth, the trunks of trees, and from blocks of marble, after being secluded for centuries from the stimulus of light and heat, and have resumed their active state of being, but have soon died after exposure to these stimulating agents.—The calculations of longevity on different parts of the

\* From Dr. Parsons's Address.

globe, place the most remarkable instances in Russia and other regions, where the low temperature of the atmosphere is slow in developing and exciting the actions of their system, and prolongs their existence to a very late period. On the contrary, the inhabitants of tropical climates, in whom heat accelerates all the functions of life, experience the earliest maturity and declension of physical powers. Females reared under a tropical sun, begin to fade and lose the attractions of youth at an age when more northern belles are glowing in all the beauty and vivacity of their sex. In like manner, the stimulus of ardent spirits chases youth from the constitution of its slaves, and clothes them prematurely with the grey garniture of years. Says the Poet:

—“For know whate’er  
Beyond its natural fervor hurries on  
The sanguine tide; whether the frequent  
bowl,  
High-season’d fare, or exercise or toil  
Protracted, spurs to its last stage tired life,  
And sows the temples with untimely  
snow.”

How often do we see the sunken eye, the shriveled cheek, the tottering step and trembling hand, in confirmed drinkers who have scarcely entered into the autumn of their existence; “sinking untimely in the grave, ere the days of their youth are well passed by.” If there are some rare exceptions founded on original soundness and vigor of constitution,—let such beware, and reflect, that although a steam engine skilfully constructed from sound materials may long endure the violence of high pressure power, yet that its machinery must wear out in proportion to the velocity of its movements; and also that a fortress that stands a long siege, has its walls more battered than one which easily surrenders.

The poor Indian, says a venerable writer, who once a month drinks himself *dead*, all but simple breathing, will outlive for years the man who drinks little and often, and is not, perhaps, suspected of intemperance.

Let us now advert to some of the most obvious diseases occasioned by the use of distilled liquors, and

3. Of the *Liver*.—Ever since diseases were traced to the abuse of intoxicating liquors, this organ has been referred to as among the first to suffer. The importance of the liver in carrying on the healthy actions of the digestive system, all must be sensible of, who have experienced any derangement in its functions, either by a deficiency or redundancy of bile, or any deterioration in its qualities. But the ordinary change of the liver is an augmentation of its size. The numerous examinations I have made of the bodies of seamen during nine years Naval service, have presented this appearance in a great majority of those who were addicted to intemperance. The direct tendency of ardent spirit to bloat this organ, is proved by its effects on fowls, when mixed with their food, as is practised by the European epicures for the purpose of making the liver as large as possible.

The truth is, the liver is among the first organs to receive the actual contact of ardent spirits. All the blood sent by the arteries to the digestive organs, is returned back to the heart by corresponding veins, and these veins absorb much of the spirit received into the stomach, and carry it, mingled with the blood, to the heart. But on their way to the heart, they all converge into one large vein, which enters the liver and distributes its contents

throughout that organ, where bile is extracted from it; and the remainder is afterwards taken up by veins and carried to the heart. Ardent spirit, then, when absorbed from the stomach by its veins, is brought at once into immediate contact with the liver, and by stimulating and irritating the organ, causes its enlargement. Indeed, take any two individuals, who are alike in all other respects, except that one drinks freely every day, though not to intoxication, and the other abstains entirely from the stimulus—and the former will present to the eye of an anatomist, a liver, differing from that of the other in color or size, that will be sufficiently indicative of unhealthy action. I might name various affections of the liver that proceed from this cause, but will proceed—

4. To those of the *Stomach*.—This organ rarely if ever escapes injury. Its delicate surface receiving day after day its acrid and unnatural stimulus, is at length deranged both in its structure and functions. You are all aware how the interior surface of the nose, which resembles in most respects that of the stomach, is changed in the inveterate snuff-taker, how the acrid powder thickens the part to which it is applied, and thus partially closing the nostrils, changes the voice and produces a constant catarrh. In like manner, the inebriate changes the surface of his stomach by stimulating drinks, producing a thickening of the inner coats, and a constant effusion of cold phlegm, of which every inveterate drinker complains, especially in the morning. To this difficulty may be added an ardent and incessant longing for the accustomed stimulus. Surrounding the inner coat of the stomach is the muscular

coat, on which all its motions and contractions depend. This is sometimes thrown into irregular or spasmodic contractions, attended with pains and cramp of the stomach, of which hard drinkers also so often complain. The appetite too becomes impaired or entirely destroyed. Here the influence of habit, on which I have dwelt, is worthy of particular attention. The daily use of provocatives of appetite, as they are termed, in the form of slings, juleps and bitters, will in time incorporate their efforts with the stomach so intimately, that perverted nature flags, and is unable to pursue an even step, without the spur of an ordinary glass. It is almost proverbial, that great rum-drinkers are little eaters. But I will turn from this unpleasant subject, with the remark, that diseases of the stomach produced by such a cause, are amongst the most difficult for a physician to manage.

The stomach is remarkable for the sympathies it holds with other organs. All severe diseases of the body affect the stomach with loss of appetite, and oftentimes with nausea and even sickness. It seems to be a concentrated organ of morbid sympathies. But then it is also a radiating centre, and, when diseased, produces various and complicated diseases in other parts. In this way the disorders produced by a fit of intoxication are communicated to the rest of the system, producing depression of spirits, and indisposition to mental and muscular exertion, with dizziness and pain of the head, throbbing of the temples, parching heat in the palms of the hands, foulness of the mouth.—In a word, the midnight debauchee, when pouring down his copious draughts of intoxicating liquors, may be said to be filling a Pando-

ra's box, that will open its lid in the morning, and diffuse misery through every vein and nerve of his prostrated and polluted system.

5. The *Skin* always betrays a man's intemperance. A flushed cheek and red and swollen nose, are always the first symptoms of spirituous excitement. The bloodvessels are here more easily roused into action than in other parts of the skin. Even the ordinary mortifications and disturbances of the mind, are manifested by the blush of shame, or the flush of anger. When the bloodvessels of the face have long been over-distended by the stimulus of ardent spirit, they seem to lose their natural contractility, and cause a bloated aspect. Erysipelas, and several other cutaneous diseases, that would otherwise have remained dormant in the system, are often roused into action, and those cutaneous affections which have previously existed, are rendered more obstinate and inveterate.

But besides those diseases of the skin that arise from excessive action of its bloodvessels, there are others that proceed from its sympathy with internal organs, that have been disordered by intemperance. The bubuckles, welks, and rosy drops, or rum blossoms, that so often emboss the cheeks of the drunkard, and which Falstaff ludicrously notices upon the face of Bardolph, are referred by physicians to a disordered state of the liver. They seem to be like red flags hoisted out upon the ramparts of the fortress by an enemy within, to denote that he holds entire and undisputed possession of the castle.

6. The *Brain*.—This organ presides over all the physical and intellectual energies of man. Not a muscle can be moved, nor an

impression felt, nor a volition exerted, where the brain ceases to perform its functions, or where its nervous communications are interrupted.—Ardent spirit acts upon the brain, *first*, through the medium of the circulation. In some cases, the liquor has been detected in the cavities of the brain.\* In most instances of intoxication, there is probably more or less of the spirit absorbed from the stomach, and carried thither in a diluted state. *Secondly*, it acts upon the brain through the medium of nervous communication. The immediate exhilaration from a glass of spirit, is too sudden to admit of absorption, and transmission through the circulation. *Thirdly*, ardent spirit acts upon the brain, though somewhat tardily, and indirectly, through the medium of its sympathy with the liver. The indirect debility and torpor that follow a fit of intoxication, extend their influence to the brain, darkening the mind with gloom and melancholy, and impairing all the muscular energies of the system. But leaving the further consideration of its mode of operation, we all know from daily observation that a trembling hand, a flagging of the strength, stiffness of the joints, and mental imbecility, are the inevitable consequences of the abuse of ardent spirits; "that the morning finds the nerves run down and unfit for exercise, till wound up by a potent glass of stimulus."

There is no truth in the vulgar saying, that the healthy laborer requires the stimulation of ardent spirits. They only transiently rouse the physical powers, with the certainty of being succeeded by a corresponding languor and debility,

\* Cooke on Nervous Diseases, and Muzzy.

and the same course must be resorted to again and again, to maintain the ordinary standard, "till finally nearly all power becomes dependent on artificial stimulation." Those who have fairly made the experiment, and whose judgment is consequently most to be relied on, tell us that the use of ardent spirits, long persisted in, wears out life, and that it hastens exhaustion, even under a single trial of strength. Let a ship's crew be stationed at the pumps, to work or sink in the mid ocean, and those who nerve their arms with such artificial excitement, will be the first to flag and drop at their stations, while the man who abstains entirely will hold out to the last. I will however add, that the strength is longest preserved, under such trying circumstances, by the tonic power of hot coffee. This fact has been ascertained by repeated trial.

That a single glass or two of distilled liquor may be taken without much harm, by a healthy laborer, is not denied. But it does no good, and is laying the foundation of intemperate habits. Besides, it is impossible to confine him to that quantity. To derive the pleasing and exhilarating effects first produced, the quantity must be daily augmented; "for a thousand facts teach us that our vital organs respond less and less readily and powerfully to the action of such stimulants, in proportion to the frequency of their application."

Happy would it be if the effects of intemperance on the brain were confined to the physical energies of man. It is his nobler faculties that are assailed and overthrown; those faculties that raise him above the brute, and make him lord of this world, and which in this life are but "in their bud of being."

The records of insane hospitals present a frightful report of the numbers consigned to their wretched abodes, who, by adopting the rules of our Society, might have continued a blessing to friends and an ornament to society. Nearly half the miserable beings confined in those cells, were the victims of intemperance, induced, in some instances, by resorting to distilled liquors as a fallacious palliative for grief, under affliction or disappointment; and in others, by a sottish habit of drinking alone, without even any such poor excuse to excite our sympathies. Besides these lamentable cases of permanent derangement, there is a more acute and fatal disease called delirium tremens, or drunkard's madness, that every physician has often met with, and found it obstinate and difficult to manage.

From mental alienation, so painful to contemplate, let us advert for a moment to the ordinary influence of ardent spirits upon the healthful exercise of the intellectual faculties. The condition of these is intimately associated with that of the brain,—they grow with its growth, strengthen with its strength, and decline with its decay. Every temporary excitement of the brain arouses the operations of the mind in a corresponding degree, but, as in other organs, the excitement soon produces fatigue.—Too often does the poet attempt to speed the wings of his imagination by an exhilarating draught, without seeming to be aware that the adventitious aid thus imparted, whirls the fancy beyond the judgment, and "leaves the body and soul in a state of listless indolence and sloth." Where is the poet, who has goaded his imagination with the intoxicating cup, that has equaled Homer and Virgil?

or the orator that has rivaled Demosthenes and Cicero? all of whom wrote before ardent spirit was known.

Is it said that genius is quickened by it, and its productions made to smell less of the lamp? they however smell more of the decanter, and of the immoral influence that springs from its habitual use. Childe Harold was written when the author practised total abstinence, and Don Juan when he jaded his muse with gin; and a better commentary on the demoralizing, debasing and polluting influence of such stimulus, cannot and need not be offered. It should be remembered that all such artful impulses are fitful and uncertain, and that he who urges the speed of his mental engine by such intensely heating fuel, hastens the declension of its power, and that he is unprovided with any safety-valve, to prevent an apoplectic explosion.

I might proceed with the catalogue of diseases that result from the use and abuse of distilled liquors, and present to you, Jaundice, Gout, Rheumatism, Dropsy, Palsy, Epilepsy, Apoplexy, and Dyspepsia in its Protean forms. In truth, there is scarcely a human infirmity that may not be directly or indirectly excited, or in some degree aggravated, by this morbid agent.

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## II.

### ON THE EFFICACY OF LARGE INJECTIONS IN THE TREATMENT OF BILIOUS COLIC.

Communicated to THOMAS COCK, M.D., &c., of New York, by J. S. PAIGE, of Owego, N. Y.

I TAKE the liberty of communicating the method of treating bilious

colic which I adopted about twelve years ago, and which I have followed ever since, with the most complete success.

The plan is, to use injections of mild, tepid fluids, to an amount sufficient to reach the obstructed or constricted portion of the gut, and thereby making a gentle, but firm pressure upon that part from below.

This practice was founded upon the incidents of the following case, which I will briefly notice. Mr. E. B., a strong, athletic man, aged about 35 years, was attacked with this species of colic in the summer of 1818. I was called upon to attend him, and pursued the practice usually adopted in such cases. Among the means made use of, were venesection, opium, various cathartic medicines, enemata, fomentations to the abdomen, general warm bathing, a blister, &c. Forty-eight hours or more were spent in this way, and several consultations were had, but all to no purpose: the obstruction remaining as obstinate, and the pain as distressing as ever.

Another expedient presented itself to my mind, that of acting upon the obstructed portion of the intestine mechanically, by injecting tepid fluids; six pints of warm water, milk and molasses, were ordered, which I commenced introducing with a syringe, intending to use the whole, or even more, if necessary, to effect my purpose. A consulting physician who was present, but unacquainted with my intention, requested me to desist, when I had used but a small part of the liquid; the patient also begged me to desist, saying that no more could be retained; but I paid little attention to the advice of my counsellor, or the entreaty of my

patient, till the latter informed me that he felt a considerable degree of pressure upon the point of obstruction; and after retaining the fluid in this situation a few moments, I desisted, having used the whole quantity prepared, and I began to hope that my work was about to answer the purpose intended, which I found to be the case in about fifteen or twenty minutes. Copious evacuations of fetid matter followed in large quantities, and a cessation of pain, and a general mitigation of symptoms, were the immediate consequences.

The case was subsequently treated with mild laxatives, diaphoretics, &c.; and after a proper time, gentle tonics were used to restore the action of the system.

Two or three weeks afterwards, the same person was again attacked in the same way from his own imprudence, and he found relief in the same way, and in a like short time.

The success of this plan in these two cases, afforded me a useful hint for the treatment of all important cases of a like kind, and I resolved to make further trials, whenever opportunities should present themselves; and a great many cases have since come under my care, all of which have been attended with the same result; and, consequently, I have made this the standing rule or method of my practice, for the last twelve years.

The rule I have adopted in such cases, and that I would recommend to others, is, to introduce a quantity of fluid with a large syringe, sufficient to make a firm, but gentle pressure upon the obstructed portion of the intestine, which may be known by the pain it gives the patient at that point; and more cer-

tain success may be expected, if the syringe be not withdrawn for a few minutes after this point be attained.

The quantity of fluid to be used, should be measured by the demand of each individual case: six pints usually answer the purpose; but in two instances, occurring in the same person, I have found it necessary to use twelve pints at a time, before the object was accomplished.

Perhaps it might be well to evacuate the rectum, before attempting to reach the obstruction. I think there would be an advantage in doing so, as some little impediment would be removed.

In the sequel, such treatment as the particular case shall require, will, of course, suggest itself to any skilful physician, taking into view the cause of the disease, and other circumstances dependent upon the disease.

I generally give mild laxatives, such as castor oil, or neutral salts, if the case be a simple one, brought on by exposure to cold, or some comparatively trifling circumstance; but if it depend on some more obviously important case, as an hepatic derangement, &c., other and more rigorous means should be used.

With regard to the composition of the fluid to be used in such cases, I should not be particular, provided it be sufficiently mild; perhaps mucilaginous injections in many instances might be preferable, particularly if the disease be of some considerable standing, and the intestines irritable or inflamed. It may, however, be proper in some cases to use stimulating mixtures, where there is much torpor of the bowels. But it is the mechanical



effect that is almost entirely to be relied on for success in this mode of treatment.

The means which urge me to recommend this mode of practice above all others with which I have been acquainted, are the following :

1st. Because it is more certain ; a mechanical dilatation of the intestine in this way is easily effected, and in a short time.

2d. Because medicines given by the mouth are so liable to be rejected by vomiting in this disease ; or if they are retained, they require more time to act, and are not so sure as this, for they may fail from inefficiency.

3d. Because, although other medicines may act in their usual time, yet by delay the patient is endangered, by the risk of inflammation supervening.

4th. Because it abbreviates the term of human suffering, by mitigating some of the keenest pangs to which our nature is subject, &c. &c.

I give you only the outline of this plan, and if it shall be thought worthy of adopting in this species of disease, and extended to other affections of a similar kind, you, and those who may become acquainted with it, can make such improvements as shall appear most proper.

You may say that the idea of introducing large quantities of liquid into the intestines, is not new : it certainly is not ; but the application of this practice I have not known to be made to the disease of colic—but in cases of intus-susception of the gut, it has long been recommended and used.—*N. Y. Med. J.*

### III.

#### NOTES ON THE EPIDEMIC ERYSIPELAS WHICH PREVAILED IN THE PROVINCES OF NEW-BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

Communicated to WILLIAM BAYARD, M.D., of New York, by ROBERT BAYARD, M.D. D.C.L., of New-Brunswick.

THE disease commenced early in the fall, although the weather had not been remarkable for any peculiar humidity or dryness. It attacked all ages, sexes, and constitutions, indiscriminately, and was prevalent as well among the upper as the lower orders, with those who enjoyed the comforts of life, and occurred in various exposures and localities. It showed itself first in my family, in a child of five years of age, who complained first of vomiting, great thirst, and the usual symptoms of inflammation of the mucous membrane of the stomach ; her constant cry was for water, which was quickly rejected. The disease was treated upon the general principles of gastritis. Venesection copiously, cupping, warm bath, leeches, and blisters—all seemed unavailing, until a very copious bleeding, *ad deliquium*, from a large opening, losing 3i. after two previous venesections. This last subdued the disease, which manifested a removal, by the desire for water ceasing. The convalescence was rapid. I may observe, cathartics had little effect ; and the child took nearly three drops of oil of croton, before the bowels yielded. The oil was given after the thirst had abated. In two or three days after her recovery, her elder sister, aged six years, was taken sick, much in the same manner. Similar treatment was adopted, with the exception of the oil of croton ;



but the bleedings were not carried to such an extent, because the sensation of thirst was not so urgent. The disease, however, was more obstinate, and traveled upwards along the œsophagus, attacking the schneiderian membrane, and was reflected from the internal nostril, upon the outer surface, extending itself gradually over the face, neck, head and thorax.

In one case (a child ten years old) the disease commenced in the stomach, passed up the œsophagus, pervaded the internal fauces, was reflected upon the face, caused gangrene internally and externally of one half of the face, involving one eye, half the nose, the cheek and ear, and ultimately producing death.

In another case, a man of previous intemperate habits was attacked on the arm. In forty-eight hours, general gangrene of the extremity supervened, the entire cellular substance was disorganized, and death followed in twenty-four hours after the commencement of gangrene.

A young woman injured her finger with a herring bone; erysipelas supervened. The disease involved the arm, and pectoral muscles. The extremities of all the fingers were lost from gangrene, while deep abscesses formed at the same time on the back of the hand, wrist, elbow, axilla, and beneath the pectoral muscles. She recovered.

A blacksmith, of temperate habits, was attacked with the disease in the knee. Tumefaction took place, elevating the patella. An incision was made in forty-eight hours after the tumefaction; large collections of pus were discharged from each side; it insinuated itself beneath the extensor muscles of the thigh. Similar abscesses were

formed over the acetabulum, and under the pectoral muscles. The fauces were also affected with inflammatory erysipelas. This man, after some weeks, recovered.

A laboring Irishman, in the poor house, complained of the usual symptoms of erysipelas; and, notwithstanding copious depletions, suppurations eventually took place in almost every joint, in the wrists, fingers, shoulders, hips, knees, ankles, with extensive insinuations along the muscles of the legs, and the longissimi of the back. He died; and the matter, in many parts, lay within the capsular coverings of the joint.

Puerperal women were peculiarly liable to the disease; and it was very fatal to many. In one case after death, the disease presented very general ravages; the whole intestinal canal was flushed with inflammation, which, in some parts, had terminated in gangrene. In one case, the peritoneal covering of the uterus and bladder was completely injected; whilst, at the same time, the ovarium was entirely disorganized with gangrene.

I have frequently seen the orifice of a vein, when opened, form the nucleus of erysipelas. In one man whom I bled, the next day the orifice became erysipelatous, and a cicatrix on the opposite arm, which had been bled some months before, puffed up, and assumed the disease.

When the erysipelas first made its appearance in this city, it exhibited a prevailing tendency to terminate in gangrene. During this period, it was very fatal. After a few months, it varied its termination, and run rapidly in deep abscesses, characterized with very little swelling. The previous existence of pain was a sufficient authority, after three or four days

duration, to plunge the lancet deeply into the affected part, and evacuate matter. I have plunged it into the knee, the pectoral muscle, the gluteus, &c., when there has been but little apparent tumefaction, and incredible quantities of matter have been discharged. Such determined and seasonable openings, I considered as having alone saved my patients. I have discharged upwards of twenty ounces of pus from beneath the pectoral muscles, where there had been but little general swelling, and no redness indicating any disposition to point outwards.

The matter insinuated and undermined parts, without showing any tendency to point externally. I did not consider the disease contagious, although whole families would be attacked with it. It seemed to depend upon some unknown peculiarities in the atmosphere, occasioning a morbid action upon the skin, vitiating, by consent, the biliary secretions, and thus ultimately deranging the digestive functions, and causing membranous inflammation. In suppurations of the knee, I have passed the probe beneath the patella, from one side of the knee to the other, and upwards some distance, under the extensor muscles. The patients recovered, but the joints were stiff. The disease assumed a variety of attacks, from a mild to a very malignant form.

The treatment was modified by circumstances, and the part affected. I generally found evacuates, and most determined bleedings, to succeed. If the stomach was not affected, and the disease was external, a gentle emetic, moderate aperients, and venesection, sufficed. In one puerperal patient, the disease appeared on the face, head,

and breast, the day after labor : I bled her ; and after some days she convalesced, and, contrary to orders, ate freely of meat. In a few hours the disease returned. I gave an emetic, with relief. But small abscesses between the membranes of the eyelids were opened.

When the disease manifested inflammation of the mucous membrane of the stomach, internal remedies seemed hurtful. In this case, most determined bleedings answered ; the quantity drawn was regulated by the effect, viz., the cessation of thirst ; afterwards mild diluents, and gentle aperients, were serviceable. Early openings after the patient complained of deep-seated local pain, unaccompanied with external redness, were indispensably requisite. The absence of swelling was no guide, contra-indicating the opening. I have known decided internal erysipelas without any external redness ; and extensive suppurations, with little or no swelling, and no other cause to suspect matter, than the prevalence of the epidemic.

Mild mercurials, when the stomach would allow, with a view to correct the bilious secretions, were serviceable. Fomentations over the region of the liver, and the antimonial ointment with mercury, with the same intention, were useful coadjutors.

Bark and wine, which have been advised in ordinary erysipelas, were used by some, but always with injury.

Blisters were serviceable in some cases ; not so much from any curative property, as from their causing cutaneous irritation, and becoming the seat of cutaneous irritation.

The disease continued to prevail first under a gangrenous for three or four months, and subsequently

under a suppurative character for eighteen months. I have met with occasional mild attacks of the suppurative disease, for two years from its first appearance. It was principally fatal among the poor, and childbed women; with the latter of whom I found bleedings and the warm bath, and large poultices over the bowels, generally successful. I have kept childbed women in a hip bath for several hours during the day. The bath was kept warm by the bed, and the order was, to get in as often as the pain was urgent upon pressure, and to remain in as long as they could.

This disease prevailed throughout Nova Scotia, and this Province;—occurring as well upon high and elevated situations, as in low and marshy exposures; as well in the formerly salubrious airs of the country, as in the dense and unwholesome confinements of city; and it was equally frequent in hospital and private practice.—*lb.*

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## MEDICAL JOURNAL.

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### SULPHATE OF QUINIA—GENTIANA—EMETINA, &c.

In the 7th volume of the Medico-Chirurgical Transactions, will be found a faithful record, by Dr. Elliotson, of all which was known of the curative virtues of Sulphate of Quinia up to 1823. Since then it has been in quite general use in this and other countries, and everywhere the same, or very similar, have been the phenomena consequent on its use. It would be little better than an insult to the reader, to pretend,

at this day, to specify these phenomena. We shall only recount the experiments made with it by Dr. Bardsley, who has given them, for brevity, in the form of a table.

In *Intermittent Fever*, 25 cases are set down, of which 18 were cured, 6 relieved, and 1 in no degree benefited by the sulphate. It is worthy of remark that several were cured by it, after the bark, in various forms, had been rejected by the stomach. Besides the malady for which bark is esteemed a specific, Dr. Bardsley has derived benefit from the Sulphate in *infantile remittent fever, bilious fever, ulcerations of the cornea, dyspepsia, and debility of the stomach, chorea, the malignant form of variola* in children, and in *neuralgia*.

Two instances of variola are referred to, in which life was evidently saved by the use of this salt, after that severe vomiting had occurred, which, in the progress of that affection, reduces so rapidly the strength of the patient, and prevents the administration of the usual means for curing the malady. In these cases, a grain and a half, mixed with a few grains of sugar, was given every hour until it was thought proper to extend the intervals.

Three cases of neuralgia are related by Dr. B., in all which the disease was subdued by the sulphate of quinine, four grains every third hour. This appears to have been about the dose in which it was usually administered by Dr. B., and the following the forms of its prescription:—

## MISTURA QUININÆ SULPHATIS.

- R. Quinina Sulphatis gr. xij.  
 Acidi Sulphurici diluti m. xxx.  
 Aquæ f. 3 xij.  
 Misce.

## PILULÆ QUININÆ SULPHATIS.

- R. Quinina Sulphatis gr. xij.  
 Glycyrrhizæ Radicis contritis gr. x.  
 Syrupi, quantum satis sit.  
 Ft. pilul. xij.

It is well known that in almost all the cinchonas, a substance called by Magendie *cinchonine*, has been found united with quinine. This substance has attracted but little notice as a medicine, and is held in little esteem as such by Magendie himself, although Dr. Duncan attributes to it some tonic and febrifuge powers. In several cases of intermittent fever, this substance has been given by Dr. B., and with uncommon success. Eleven are related in his work, and in all of them it cured the disease, in the same doses as the sulphate of quinine had done. In one other case it failed to do good, and the patient was subsequently cured by arsenic. That it possesses any advantage over the quinine we are not apprised, nor are we warranted, at present, in exciting any expectations from it as a remedy in any known disease.

## GENTIANA.

This alkali, obtained from the root of the gentiana lutea, is given in doses of one grain twice or thrice daily, in such cases as demand the use of a strong bitter. It may be given in pill or tincture. Dr. B. prefers the former; Magendie gave it in the latter. The common infusion and compound tincture of gen-

tian usually suit a weak stomach so well, that there seems no particular call for its uncombined alkali, and although in some dyspeptic cases Dr. B. found it serviceable, he expresses the opinion that it is not likely to prove a very valuable addition to our materia medica.

## EMETINA.

The roots of the several species of ipecacuanha, all derive their emetic power from a peculiar principle which they contain, and which is called emetina, and which, in a dose of from one half to two or three grains, produces vomiting followed by a long sleep. The odor and taste of ipecac. are so great objections to its use by most persons, that it is somewhat singular this alkali has not obtained more general repute. Respecting Dr. B.'s experience with it, he shall speak for himself.

In the dose of five grains, says he, dissolved in two or three ounces of rose water, it has proved an active emetic. In the proportion of half a grain, every five hours, it has acted as a mild diaphoretic; and in the dose of a fourth of a grain, every three hours, as an expectorant. It has produced these effects with great certainty. In some instances of *dysentery*, *chronic diarrhœa*, and *chronic pulmonary catarrh*, I have derived from the emetina, in combination with a small proportion of opium, much benefit.\* I have generally used it in the form of a pill, with a small quantity of aromatic confection. My trials with emetina do not lead me to recommend it as a substitute for the ordinary powder of ipecacuanha, except as a remedy

\* It may be proper to observe, that in these cases the impure or colored emetina was employed.

for children, and in certain cases of idiosyncrasy in which the effluvium of that drug is found to occasion highly pernicious effects. Several cases of this kind are upon record.\*

Besides the various substances on which we have now offered the reader a series of remarks, Dr. Bardsley made trial of *Picrotoxia*, *Delphia*, *Solanina*, and *Lupulia*, in several diseases; but with so little success as to consider any notice of them unnecessary. Brief as have been our sketches of the Hospital facts and observations of this distinguished practitioner, we trust the reader will find them of use where all his professional knowledge most avails him, at the bedside of his patients.

#### DESCRIPTIVE ANATOMY.

WE have often been surprised that so little attempt should be made to give to elementary works on anatomy a greater degree of interest. Descriptions of bones, and muscles, and bloodvessels, are at best but a dull affair to the student, unless, while he is reading, he has an opportunity to dissect; in which case, an accurate account, however dry, will serve sufficiently well as a comparison to his investigations. A good anatomical treatise, however, ought to be something more than a mere guide to dissection; it should be so written that it may give, or at least recal, a tolerably good notion of the structure of the parts. This can only be accomplished when the descriptions are illustrated by plates,

presenting a faithful delineation of the parts described. In many of the best modern works on descriptive anatomy, we have the letter press and the plates in separate volumes. This arrangement permits the plates to be on so large a scale as to give a good idea of the connections of parts without rendering the page inconveniently large. But it is principally to large and expensive works, such as those of Lizards and Cloquet, that this arrangement is adapted. In those on a moderate scale, it is far more convenient to have the figure on the same page with the description, than to be obliged to turn to a different volume, or even to a different part of the same volume, in order to find the plate referred to. Neither is it only in anatomical works that the convenience of readers is consulted by such an arrangement. In works on the different branches of natural history, in accounts of voyages, geographical works, and others requiring illustration, it has often occurred to us that a change in the mode of publishing, which would render references less laborious and troublesome, would be a material improvement. No one who belongs to the numerous class of lazy readers, can fail to have experienced, at times, how great a temptation is offered to forego the instruction which might be derived from a graphic illustration, by the circumstance of being obliged to seek it, if sought at all, in a distinct volume from the one he is reading.

We have been led into this train of remark, by a cursory examination

\* Vid. Medical and Physical Journal, vol. xxlii.

of the first volume of a new treatise on descriptive anatomy, by Mr. Paxton, an English surgeon, already known to the public by his Illustrations of Paley's Natural Theology. Mr. Paxton's descriptions are principally recommended by the plainness and simplicity of the language, and a somewhat sedulous attention to delicacy of expression, which really adapt his work almost as well for the general reader as for the professional student. The great advantage, however, which it possesses as an elementary treatise, is derived from the arrangement of the plates, which have so strict a juxtaposition with the descriptions referring to them, that the eye is enabled to catch, almost without effort, the precise part of the plate to which the attention is directed. In the woodcuts we are disappointed, after having seen the account given of the work in the foreign journals. Many of them are of rather ordinary workmanship, and from being crowded with reference letters, present that shabby, blotted appearance which necessarily arises from representing minute objects in so coarse a mode. Others, however, are executed with great neatness, and even beauty; and in all, the delineation of the parts seems to be given with care and fidelity. The volume which is published, contains the bones, ligaments, muscles, and arteries; so that the work will probably be completed in a second volume. We are disposed to believe that a reprint of this work would be popular in this country. As a specimen of the manner in which Mr. Paxton has executed the literary

portion of his task, we select the following general description of the properties of the muscles.

The muscles are instruments or active agents, in producing the various movements of our body; by their means we are endued with the power of moving from place to place, and of performing every manual exercise or bodily exertion. Not only are they the prime moving powers in locomotion, but speech, singing, and the acts of chewing, swallowing, etc., are performed by muscles; indeed, by means of these organs the blood is circulated, the stomach and intestines urge on their contents, and the different conduits of the glands propel their fluids.

The most characteristic property of muscles is *contractility*: in whatever position our limbs may repose, it must be muscular contraction to produce their action. Muscular contractility also is displayed in the amputation of a limb; for immediately the muscles are divided, the two ends contract in opposite directions, leaving between them a space proportionate to their retraction, and the retraction is therefore more or less, according to the length of the muscular fibres.

This contractility of muscles constitutes muscular action, and consists in drawing the more moveable towards the most fixed point to which it is connected. Every moveable point in the animal frame is constantly situated between two muscular powers opposed to each other; between those of flexion and extension, of elevation and depression, of adduction and abduction, etc.: this opposition is essential to motion; for in whatever direction the limb is to be moved, the *moveable point* must necessarily be in the opposed direction; the act of flexion requires it should be first extended, and *vice versa*. But when flexors and extensors are both in a state of action, they counterbalance each other;

there is a rigid state of the muscles, and the limb is fixed. The effect of every muscle that contracts, is not only to act upon the bone into which it is implanted, but also on the opposite muscle, and this constitutes the phenomena of antagonist muscles; the muscles are so situated that the one class cannot be extended without the other contracting, and reciprocally.

The muscles, on contracting, become evidently harder; they increase in thickness and decrease in length, but their volume remains nearly the same. Prevost and Dumas describe their fibres, in a state of repose, as straight lines; but, when acting, all at once bending themselves in a waved direction, and presenting in an instant a great number of angular and regularly-opposed undulations: if the cause which led to the contraction ceases, the right lines of the fibres are restored with the same rapidity as the waved lines were produced.

This contractility, on which depends all the phenomena of animal motion, and which also promotes many of the exterior and interior functions, is exclusively seated in the muscular system. It possesses the faculty of moving under the influence of the brain, whether that influence be determined by the will or by other causes. If the brain of a man is compressed, the faculty of contracting the muscles ceases. The intensity of muscular contraction, that is, the degree of power with which the extremities of the fibres approximate, is in proportion to the excitement of the brain; it is generally regulated by the will, according to certain limits, which are different in different individuals. When the organization of the muscles is strongly fibrous, and they are of a deep red color, such muscles, with an equal power of the will, produce much more powerful efforts than muscles whose fibres are fine, pale, and smooth. The cerebral influence

and the structure of the muscular tissue, therefore, are the two elements on which depend intensity of muscular contraction.

*Irritability* of muscles, called by Haller the *vis insita*, is the latent power inherent in the muscular fibres, producing that tremulous motion which is often felt in various parts of the body, without any evident cause, and independent of the will. It is to be distinguished from muscular contractility by being more permanent, and by occurring on the application of chemical or mechanical stimuli. A muscle may be separated from the limb, or the heart removed from the body, and for some time afterwards, on pricking it with a needle or passing the electric shock through it, there will be seen convulsive twitchings of its fibres. The irritability of a muscle is present after death; and, though doubtless a phenomenon worthy of study, is not to be confounded with the muscular contractions I have just described.

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#### TATE ON HYSTERIA.

MESSRS. CAREY & HART, of Philadelphia, to whom the profession in this country is indebted for many valuable republications, have lately issued an edition of Mr. Tate's treatise on Hysteria. In this work, Mr. Tate has advanced some novel and interesting views of the disease, and adduced several cases in illustration of them. If there is any of the ills of humanity which more clearly than any other requires a monograph, it is this Protean malady. The openness and candor, as well as the apparent industry, with which this has now been furnished us, bespeak for it a recommendation for general perusal.

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**Syrup of White Poppies.**—It is said in the English journals that several very severe and almost fatal consequences have resulted from the exhibition to children of what was sold for *syrup of the white poppy*. On examination, it was found that the medicine was made by mixing landanum with simple cerate.—A few years ago, several cases were published of the fatal effects of the syrup of poppy. Is it not probable that the medicine was not pure, but such a fabrication as that above mentioned?

A letter from Leipsic of the 9th of May, says that the cholera morbus

was committing dreadful ravages in the Russian army. The cholera had also acquired a formidable character at Warsaw, but at the last accounts was believed to be on the decline.

Vaccination has been introduced into Greece by the assistance of the physicians of the French troops.

Whole number of deaths in Boston the week ending July 1st, 23. Males, 10—Females, 11. Stillborn, 2.

Of consumption, 1—stoppage in the bowels, 1—disease of the heart, 1—dropsy on the brain, 2—old age, 3—lung fever, 1—cholera morbus, 1—infantile, 2—fits, 1—scarlet fever, 2—inflammation in the head, 1—mortification, 1—cholera, 1—liver complaint, 1—inflammation in the bowels, 1—delirium tremens, 1.

### ADVERTISEMENTS.

THE Boston Medical and Surgical Journal is now issued regularly on the 1st of each month in Monthly Parts, which are sent to those subscribers, and those only, who have notified the publishers of their desire to receive the numbers in that form. We would remind our weekly subscribers that those who wish to receive the monthly instead of the weekly series, can make the alteration at any time they may think proper. The price for either form of the work is the same as in former years.

Those readers of the Journal who are desirous of having the volumes uniform in size when bound, and who object to our plan of two volumes a year on this account, are not perhaps aware that it need not prevent such uniformity, as the numbers for a whole year may still be bound up together, in the same manner as heretofore, except with the addition of another figure, by the binder, on the back.

Authors, publishers, booksellers, lecturers, and others, who may wish to publish information of any kind particularly interesting to medical men, are informed that the Cover of the Medical Journal is reserved for such advertisements, which will be inserted on reasonable terms, and will be sent *once* to all the weekly subscribers. Advertisements would probably in this way meet the notice of ten times the number of physicians that would see them in any newspaper.

They are also apprised that by sending to the Editor a franked copy of any new medical work, a proper notice of it will be made in the body of the Journal.

### ENGLISH AND FRENCH MEDICINES.

JARVIS & PEIRSON are constantly receiving the nice preparations of MANDER, WEAVER & MANDER, and of PELLETIER, such as Pil. Hydrargyri, Submurias Hydrargyri, Confec. Sennæ, Carb. Ammoniacæ, Ext. Belladonnæ, Ext. Conii, Antim. Tart., Aqua Ammoniacæ, Magnesia Calc., Ol. Croton, Hydriodas Sodæ, Hydriodas Potassæ, Piperine, Strychnine, Iodine, Sulphate Quinine, &c. &c.

They have also, Concentrated Balsam Copaiva, prepared by a union of the oil of Copaiva with the Balsam. "It is four times the strength of the Liquid Balsam, and may be taken in pills, without the least inconvenience, neither communicating taste, or imparting odor to the breath; it is also retained without the least disquietude or uneasiness to the stomach."

"This article differs materially from what is termed the Extract, or Resin of Copaiva, being not in the least deteriorated in the preparation, nor at all weakened by admixture of any foreign substance for the purpose of giving consistence."—*American Jour. Med. Sciences*.

Also, Oil Copaiva, Oil of Cubebs, Fluid Extract of Sarsaparilla, &c. &c.

\* \* \* Physicians from the Country will be supplied with genuine Medicines upon the most reasonable terms. July 1.

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